

1 Samuel 16:4-23 - Thursday, March 13th, 2014

- For tonight's study, we'll begin in verse 4 having only studied the first three verses last week, where God tells Samuel to anoint a new king.
- However, we'll need a couple of things from verses one through three in order to better understand what lies ahead in this very big chapter.
- First, God has not told Samuel it will be Jesse's youngest son David, and second, God is protecting Samuel and Jessie's house from Saul.

(4) So Samuel did what the LORD said, and went to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" (5) And he said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons, and invited them to the sacrifice.

- Right out of the shoot here these verses raise a couple of questions the first of which is, why were the elders of Bethlehem so afraid of him.
- Couple of thoughts on this, one of which is that Samuel is God's man with God's authority, and these elders think they must be in trouble.
- In other words, it's the common response of assuming the worst, when someone in a position of authority over us, wants a meeting with us.

- A second thought is that they had heard the news of what happened with Saul when Samuel chopped the king of the Amalekites to pieces.
- I suppose in all fairness to the elders of Bethlehem, they were justifiably afraid in their trepidation and trembling at Samuel coming to them.
- I think the take away here is that often times we would do well to have a reverent fear of God especially when it comes to serious matters.

(6) So it was, when they came, that he looked at Eliab and said, "Surely the LORD's anointed is before Him!" (7) But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

- This is striking to me for a number of reasons not the least of which is as godly as Samuel is he still capitulates to the outward appearance.
- As a pastor this is as encouraging as it is convicting to me. It's encouraging because if Samuel could make this mistake, I don't feel so bad.
- Conversely, it's convicting because if Samuel could be duped by mans outward appearance, then how much more so can I be duped too.

Charles Spurgeon - "Even prophets err when they judge by appearances. Men are not to be valued by their looks but by their hearts."

- Be that as it may, this is perhaps one of the most important principles in all scripture by virtue of how it speaks to God's ways vs. our ways.
- Namely, what man sees is not what God sees, such that man looks at the outward appearance, whereas God looks at the inward heart.
- It's important to understand how in that day, they would see everything and everyone through the lens of their culture and their customs.

- Let me explain, Eliab is the first-born son of Jesse, which culturally meant that he would clearly be the first choice as Jesse's first-born son.
- The reason I point this out is because Samuel had wrongly assumed God would choose, not refuse, the cultural norm of the first-born son.
- There's another take away here as it relates to the undue influence of cultural norms superseding that which God may instead seek to do.

Of this Henry Morris writes, "God's method is clearly not that which is commonly followed by either pulpit committees or political parties, but it works better!"

- If you were to ask me what I thought the biggest areas we as Christians and especially pastors can get into trouble, this would have to be it.
- This is one of those principles that you can't break, because it breaks you, and it's not just in the arena of ministry, it's in every arena of life.
- How many marriages ended in divorce because one looked to the outward appearance instead of looking to the Lord Who knows the heart.

- How many jobs ended in termination because the employer looked to the outward appearance instead of looking at the inward character.
- You can fill in the blanks yourself with virtually every arena of life using this same principle of simply looking to the Lord who sees the heart.
- I'll take it a step further and suggest the looking to and even the esteeming of man's outward appearance rises to the level of being idolatry.

As one commentator so aptly put it, "The world is full of idolatries, but I question if any idolatry has been more extensively practiced than the idolatry of the outward appearance."

(8) So Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." (9) Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." (10) Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen these."

- You'll forgive the humor I see in this, but can you imagine how Samuel must have felt after realizing that God had not chosen any of them?
- I think we have to be fair to Samuel in that it would have been appropriate according to the custom of the day to go from oldest to youngest.
- I'm of the belief that Samuel is now finally realizing that like Saul, all seven of them may have looked the part, but didn't have God's heart.

(11) And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all the young men here?" Then he said, "There remains yet the youngest, and there he is, keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him. For we will not sit down till he comes here."

- I'd like to share four things that come leaping out from this verse before we move on to verse twelve, concerning both Jesse and Samuel.
- First, understand how in that day the cultures significance of the first-born son was matched only by the insignificance of the youngest son.
- While this may explain it, it certainly doesn't excuse it when David's father doesn't even include him, in thinking God would never pick him.

By way of the personal application of this to our lives, Allan Redpath has some very valuable insight on this. Here's what he had to say, "So small was David in his father's esteem that it wasn't considered necessary to include him in the family when the prophet of God called them to sacrifice. ...You may not be intellectual or well thought of in your family circle; you may be despised by others for your faith in Christ. Perhaps you had only a little share in the love of your parents, as David did. But remember that those who are rejected of men often become beloved of the Lord."

Charles Spurgeon - "He who was retiring and pious was but little esteemed at home. Parents make great mistakes when they undervalue good children because they do not happen to be ...pushing. Despised ones should be comforted when they remember that the Lord knows all about them, and will bring them forward in due time. Verily, there are last who shall be first."

- The second thing that leaps out of this verse is Samuel's unflinching belief in what God said in spite of the circumstances contradicting it.
- The truth made known, Samuel could have arguably and even justifiably questioned whether or not God had really said it was Jesse's son.
- The point being is that often times the enemy will plant seeds of doubt just as he did in the garden with Eve, so we'll question God's Word.

- The third thing that leaps out of verse eleven is what we're told David was doing when his father finally divulges that he has an eighth son.
- Namely, "keeping the sheep." Actually, I believe there's a reason the Holy Spirit deemed it necessary to include this detail in the narrative.
- Here's what I'm thinking, God was preparing David for what He was preparing for David, by giving him a shepherd's heart after His heart.

Psalms 78:70-72 NKJV He also chose David His servant, And took him from the sheepfolds; (71) From following the ewes that had young He brought him, To shepherd Jacob His people, And Israel His inheritance. (72) So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, And guided them by the skillfulness of his hands.

- The fourth thing that leaps out of this is how that David was the "8th" son of Jesse, after God did not choose the final "7th" son of Jesse.
- Those of you who are familiar with the significance of certain numbers in scripture probably already know where I'm going with all of this.
- Suffice it to say, in scripture, the number 7 is the number associated with completion, and the number 8 is the number of new beginnings.

In his book, "Number in Scripture," author E.W. Bullinger writes this about the number "8," "It is 7 plus 1. Hence, it is the number specially associated with Resurrection and Regeneration, and the beginning of a new era or order. When the whole earth was covered with the flood, it was Noah "the eighth person" (2 Peter 2:5) who stepped out on to a new earth to commence a new order of things. "Eight souls" (1 Peter 3:20) passed through it with him to the new or regenerated world."

- We not only see this in scripture, we also see this in nature such that seven days complete one week and the 8th day beginning a new one.
- Seven colors complete the rainbow, making the eighth the beginning of a new one, just as the seven notes complete the musical scale, etc.
- The point being is that God is going to bring about a new beginning for the children of Israel, vis-à-vis the David whose eighth son of Jesse.

(12) So he sent and brought him in. Now he *was* ruddy, with bright eyes, and good-looking. And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him; for this *is* the one!" (13) Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

- The description given of David in verse twelve tells us that he had a fair complexion, and he was a very handsome and bright young man.
- While we don't know the exact age of David at the time he was anointed, the general consensus is that he was between 11-14 years old.
- The reason I mention this is because man will usually look down upon youth because they are young when that may be whom God will call.

1 Timothy 4:12 NIV Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.

(14) But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit from the LORD troubled him. (15) And Saul's servants said to him, "Surely, a distressing spirit from God is troubling you.

- Verse fourteen can be a difficult passage for some because it seems to imply that Christians can have the Holy Spirit depart from them.
- The problem with this is that the New Testament is very clear when it comes to the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian who is born again.
- Passages like Romans 8, and 1 Corinthians 6 are just two such passages that insure and assure that nothing can separate us from Him.

(16) Let our master now command your servants, *who are* before you, to seek out a man *who is* a skillful player on the harp. And it shall be that he will play it with his hand when the distressing spirit from God is upon you, and you shall be well." (17) So Saul said to his servants, "Provide me now a man who can play well, and bring *him* to me." (18) Then one of the servants answered and said, "Look, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, *who is* skillful in playing, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a handsome person; and the LORD *is* with him." (19) Therefore Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and said, "Send me your son David, who *is* with the sheep."

(20) And Jesse took a donkey *loaded with* bread, a skin of wine, and a young goat, and sent *them* by his son David to Saul. (21) So David came to Saul and stood before him. And he loved him greatly, and he became his armorbearer. (22) Then Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "Please let David stand before me, for he has found favor in my sight." (23) And so it was, whenever the spirit from God was upon Saul, that David would take a harp and play *it* with his hand. Then Saul would become refreshed and well, and the distressing spirit would depart from him.

- This is what I call a very interesting end to a very big chapter. The reason being is that God is once again preparing David for the throne.
- God has orchestrated the circumstances perfectly to position a very young David in the very royal court he will yet future reign in as king.
- What's even more interesting is that Saul doesn't yet know that this very talented and gifted musician is the very one who will succeed him.

Of this one commentator wrote, "Unwittingly, Saul was becoming dependent on the one designated to succeed him."

F.B. Meyer - "From whatever side we view the life of David, it is remarkable. It may be that Abraham excelled him in faith, and Moses in the power of concentrated fellowship with God, and Elijah in the fiery force of his enthusiasm. But none of these was so many-sided as the richly gifted son of Jesse."